

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 235382

FOLLOWING REPEAT DACCA 4828 ACTION INFO ISLAMABAD NEW DELHI

SECSTATE DATED 10/24/74.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4828

E.O. 11652: GDS

T

TAGS: PFOR, PK, BG

SUBJ: PAK-BANGLADESH RELATIONS

REF: A. DACCA 4608; B. DACCA 2966

SUMMARY: TALK WITH BENGALIEE FOREIGN AFFAIRI OFFICIAL AGAIN
CONFIRMS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT
OUTSTANDING ISSUES WITH PAKISTAN REMAINS HALTED. BENGALIEES
SEE PAKISTANI UNPREDICTABILITY AS CHIEF PROBLEM. BANGALIEES
REMAIN READY TO SEEK SOLUTION THROUGH ACCOMMODATION BUT HAVE NO
PRESENT REASON TO THINK RESUMPTION OF SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS
LIE IN EARLY OFFING. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR SUBCONTINENTAL AFFAIRS KAISER MURSHED
ON OCTOBER 23, HE CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN
BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN HAVE NOT MOVED FORWARD SINCE PRIMIN
BHUTTO'S LATE JUNE VISIT TO DACCA. THERE NO SIGNS EVIDENT TO
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BENGALIEES THAT PAKISTANIS PRESENTLY INTERESTED IN ADDRESSING OUT-

STANDING ISSUES OF DIVISION OF ASSETS AND REPATRIATION OF BIHARIS.;

2.; 43 \$8;8 89, 9* - 35, MURSHED SAID THAT BANGLADESH FINDS PAKISTANI APPROACH TO ISSUES CHARACTERIZED BY SEEMING UNPREDICTABILITY. HE SAID THAT DURING COURSE OF APRIL, 1974 MEETINGS WHICH RESULTED IN TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT, BENGALIS HAD PROPOSED TO PAKISTANIS THAT ISSUE BE FIRST CONSIDERED AT OFFICIAL LEVEL. IT WAS BDG VIEW THAT THIS WOULD PERMIT PROMPT DETERMINATION--AND DIVISION--OF READILY IDENTIFIABLE AND QUANTIFIABLE ASSETS SUCH AS GOLD HOLDINGS OF STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN AND EQUIPMENT OF PUBLIC CORPORATIONS LIKE PIA AND NATIONAL SHIPPING CORPORATION. RE LESS EASILY IDENTIFIABLE/QUANTIFIABLE ASSETS, NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE REQUIRED, POSSIBLY EVEN AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, BUT FACT THAT SOME PORTION OF ASSETS COULD BE TRANSFERRED RELATIVELY PROMPTLY TO BANGLADESH WOULD MEET BDG'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL NEEDS REGARDING THIS MATTER.

3. MURSHED SAID AZIZ AHMED HAD COUNTERED THIS PROPOSAL BY SAYING THAT ALL ASPECTS OF ISSUE REQUIRED A "POLITICAL SOLUTION" WHICH ONLY MUJIB AND BHUTTO COULD ACHIEVE. BENGALIS ACCEPTED THIS AND, THUS, BHUTTO'S Dacca VISIT WAS SEEN AS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT. WHEN IT TOOK PLACE AND BENGALIS TOLD THAT MATTER WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED FIRST BY OFFICIALS AND NONE OF THOSE NEEDED FOR TASK WERE INCLUDED IN THE PAKISTANI DELEGATION, THE BENGALIS FELT BETRAYED.

4. MURSHED DID NOT LINGER ON SUBJECT OF DIVISION OF LIABILITIES, BUT LEFT IMPRESSION THAT BDG TENDS TO SEE THIS AS MATTER WHICH BASICALLY DE MINIMIS. IT APPEARS THAT BDG TENDS TO CONCEIVE OF LIABILITIES AS LIMITED TO EXTERNAL DEBT AND THAT GOP IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DOMESTIC OBLIGATIONS WHICH RAISED PRIOR TO MARCH, 1971. IN THIS SETTING, IT APPEARS THAT BDG CONCLUDES PRESENT PROCESS OF SORTING OUT EXTERNAL DEBT TAKES CARE OF PROBLEM.

5. TURNING TO BIHARIS, MURSHED SAID BDG FEELS THAT PAKISTAN AGAIN DISPLAYS UNPREDICTABILITY. COMMENTING ON THE OPERATION OF THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT, HE SAID GOP HAS YET TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS IN TERMS OF BOTH LETTER AND SPIRIT. RE FORMER, HE

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SAID THAT PAKISTAN HAS FAILED TO ARRANGE FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 12,000 BIHARIS WHOM IT HAS ALREADY CLEARED. RE LATTER, MURSHED OFFERED VIEW THAT LANGUAGE OF TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (VIDE PARAGRAPH 12) INTENDS FAR GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND LIBERALITY THAN

PAKISTANIS HAVE SO FAR PROVEN WILLING TO DISPLAY.

6. MURSHED SAID THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS ESPECIALLY VEXING

TO MUJIB. THE PRIMIN FELT THAT HIS DCISION TO DROP WAR CRIMES TRIALS WAS A MAJOR CONCESSION AND HAD ASSERTED IN THE PRESENCE OF MURSHED THAT HE HAD NEVER BEFORE ABANDONED A COMMITMENT. MURSHED ADDED THAT MUJIB HAD SEEN THIS ACTION AS INVOLVING POLITICAL RISKS DOMESTICALLY BUT HAD DECIDED THAT IT WOULD PROMPT PAKISTAN TO BE MUCH MORE FLEXIBLE. IN THE AFTERMATH OF BHUTTO'S DACCA VISIT, THE PRIMIN FEELS THAT HE MISCALCULATED GRAVELY.

7. IN CLOSING, MURSHED REITERATED VIEW THAT BAHGLADESH STANDS READY TO MOVE FORWARD. HE ADDED THAT BENGALEES HAD HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH PAKISTANIS IN NEW YORK AT UNITED NATIONS BUT EVERYTHING REMAINS IN ABEYANCE FOR THE MOMENT.

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